The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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RELIGION AND THE COMMON LIFE

WE are too much given to imagining that religion is something intended merely for the emergencies of life. When sorrow comes, when death threatens, when we are laid aside by illness or calamity, when it is the time of Lent and we are asked to attend all sorts of unusual church services and refrain from ordinary innocent indulgences, both for our own profit and for the love of God—in these special circumstances, we think, religion has its home, asserts its claims and is of use to mortals. A good many of us seem to carry our religion with us very much as a venturer into strange countries packs up with his baggage a little kit of medical helps and remedies for accidents and illnesses, hoping all the time in his secret heart that the need may never arise for him or his companions to use them, but that they all may come home unopened, just as they were packed. Or, in another figure, we are tempted to regard religion as a special form of insurance policy to be put away in some safe place until calamity befalls us.

I am not in the least inclined to question or to make light of the need and uses of religion in these times of trial or distress. But I deny utterly that these are religion's primary or most helpful purposes. It is not only "a very present help in trouble," it is a friend and companion of the ordinary life and of the prosperous as well as the calamitous experiences. It is also true that we can never get the best religion has to offer in emergencies unless we have welcomed and made good use of it in our ordinary days. The best, the first, defense against the fear of disease is not in a medicine chest, but in a sound and vigorous body and a habit of wholesome living. If that be not there, the physician's task is doubled—he must combat both the new disease and the long-standing weakness in order to get vigor back into the suffering frame.

Religion is for times of trouble. Yes, but religion may be hard to come by when the mind is suffering with the body. Doing the right thing at the wrong time does not always serve our turn. Think of the comfort it would be to the troubled, failing soul in the parting hours of life to have entered long ago into clear and cordial relations with "Him with whom we have to do," and to enjoy the happy memories and the assured experience of his companionship. To postpone our religious attainments and endeavors is as if a traveler, who is aware that he must sometime travel in France, should say: "It is too much trouble. I can't afford to bother now. I won't pay any attention to the French language yet. It will be time enough to master it when I reach the first French custom house." These postponements rest upon the heresy that our ordinary days are good enough without religion, because religion is intended for the day of trouble. It may always be called in like the doctor when emergencies arise, and is distinctly not for the common experiences of every-day living.

It would be a serious impeachment of the Christian religion which we profess if it stood apart, as so many seem to think, from common days and familiar experiences; reserved, like the best silver and the damask tablecloths, for special company and festival occasions. For one thing —to speak first of our own hereditary faith in its relation to broad human instincts—it would put Christianity apart and, I must say, hold it behind, most other faiths in regard to the place which is accorded it in daily activities. The hourly life of a pious Hindu, for example, what he does and how he does it, what he means and how he speaks, is in many ways prescribed by his religion. Certain things are sacred, like the cow. Certain other things are forbidden as profane, like the eating of beef. There are ceremonies to be observed and pilgrimages are strenuously recommended. The pious Hindu takes his religion with him all day long—as a good many so-called Christians never seem to do. In this sense, Boston, even in Lent, would seem to the faithful and observance-following Hindu a far

less religious city than his own Benares. For it must be said of a good many of our townsmen, I am afraid one must concede, that they do not seem much inclined to associate their religion intimately with their working hours or with their places of amusement.

It is quite possible, of course, that this program-making for every moment of the day in the name of a dictatorial religious system may deteriorate into a dull slavery and rigidity of the soul. Or, on the other hand, the prescriptions of the law of ritual and of conduct may be recognized but disregarded, to the hurt of the conscience, or may come to be evaded in deliberate hypocrisy. We have a warning on this very point in the clear words of Christ. His disciples were hungry one day and they ate without that ceremonial washing of the hands which the Pharisees had learned from old tradition. These strict religious leaders from whose name our word "pharisaic" is taken, were horrified, not at all, as a modern doctor might be, because the hands of the disciples were dirty and might carry infection with the food they took, but because they had paid no attention to the tradition of the elders. There is humor as well as indignation in our Lord's rebuke. He drew a picture of the formal baptism of pots and pans and brazen vessels and couches and showed them how incongruous all this formalism was in those who had invented a method in the name of God for excusing men from the duty of helping their aged parents in their need. They consecrated the gift in order to avoid the obligation—and then they used it for their own self-regarding purposes!

The common sense of the world has always scorned this sort of formal religious observance which stops short of ordinary needs and usual days. Men have regarded it as a tax of release, a payment to secure an easy letting-off from moral obligations, a license to do, outside the limits set, what their own selfishness desired, a compact with the gods that if their ritual demands were met they would not interfere with conduct. "If I go to church on Sunday and pay my dues and pew rent promptly, that is to say, I need not think seriously of my religion on the other six days of the week. If I give largely of the money I have made, I need not scrutinize too closely the methods I have used to make it." I have even known men who seemed at the first glance to be counting on the piety of their wives or mothers to get them safely past the guarded gates and into heaven at last. What they would do in heaven when they arrived, or whether they would ever feel at home there, it never seems to have occurred to them to ask.

Surely we need a religion which is consonant with ordinary living and fits in well with common days. It is not good to wake up in the morning with the feeling that we must strain and labor hard to be religious. We ought to be religious instinctively and joyfully. Faith and hope and love should be as natural and familiar as breathing. We ought not to sigh that Lent is come and we must restrain or punish ourselves; and by way of compensation may look forward to a release and perhaps a bit of a riot after Easter. There is something wrong with the soul that thinks it would be glad to take an occasional vacation from the trials of its religious experience. That man has missed the best of his religion who is not glad of it and never has learned to say: "O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together!"

For if that is the way he has looked at his religion, he has never learned to look to God as to his Father and his Friend. There may be something false and daunting in the teaching he has had, eclipsing the Divine love behind a cloud of fear. There may be something wrong or slinking in his own life which makes him wish to keep his thoughts and actions from what he feels is the intruding, reprehending eye of God. But he has quite evidently missed the comfort and the joy which the companionship of the Divine presence and upholding ought to give. There is nothing strange or out of common reach in such experience of the worth and joy of our religion in the midst of the concerns and adventures of the common life. It is the every-day experience of thousands. If you wish to know what Christ can do and how God gives Himself in Fatherhood to men, do not go for your study to the learned books, or even to the saints and martyrs in their hours of ecstasy. Go to some plain men and women living the common life in ordinary days and learn how such disciples illustrate the Beatitudes of Christ in quiet hearts and happy days and worth-while living.

Jesus Himself came out of commonplace experiences to bring a glorious life of joy and satisfaction to quite ordinary folks. He never set Himself upon a pinnacle or despised the lowliest hearts. He never moved in "the best society" or belonged to the exclusive or the highly-intellectual circles. When He would illustrate what the Kingdom of Heaven is like He called a little child and set him in the midst of His disciples. He lived the common life and founded His Church with elements drawn from the plain and laboring people of the country villages. And the notion that the Sabbath was the only religious day of the week would never have appealed to Him.

It is quite useless to set up restraining walls of ritual or commandment unless the spirit of love and joy and consecration rules within. Jesus everywhere and always asserts and insists that religion is a personal relation or a set of personal relations. We cannot set ourselves wholly off from our neighbors, even if we wished to do so—which may Heaven forbid! Much less can we

build a fence and set a watch at the gate to keep out God. The common life, the every-day experience is the very place of His companioning with men. If we do not find Him there we may be sure that He has hidden Himself from us altogether.—*Saturday Night Thoughts, from "Boston Transcript."*

A SYMPATHETIC FEELING

In order to sympathize with people to the fullest extent it is necessary to have the same experience they have had. An adult cannot sympathize with a youngster unless he recalls his own boyhood days with all their "smarting" experiences.

When the ice man came out of the house he found a small boy sitting on one of his blocks of ice. "'Ere," he roared, "wot are yer a-sittin' on that fer? Git off of it!"

The small boy raised a tear-stained face. "Was you ever a boy?" he queried faintly.

"Of course I was," said the ice man, fuming. "But—"

"And did you ever play truant?" cut in the youngster.

"Of course I did," snarled the ice man. "Now then you—"

"An' when you got home did yer father take a stick an'—"

"Sit where you are my little man," the ice man said, gulping. "I understand."—*Kablegram.*

WITH OUR HOME-KEEPERS

Favorite Recipes

Pickled Cauliflower.—Four heads cauliflower, 1 cup salt, 2 quarts vinegar, 2 cups sugar and ¼ cup pickle spices. Separate flowerettes of cauliflower, add the salt and let stand over night. Place in colander, rinse with cold water and let drain. Tie spices in thin bag and boil with vinegar and sugar and the cauliflower; boil a few minutes and pour to overflowing in can. Cover and seal airtight.

Pickled Watermelon Rind.—Three and one-half pounds watermelon rind, 1½ cups vinegar, 2 pounds brown sugar, ½ ounce cinnamon, ¼ ounce whole cloves. Remove a thick paring (about one-third inch) from rind of watermelon, cut out all pink part; then cut in diamond shapes (2 inches long). Soak over night in cold salt water, using 2 tablespoons salt to each quart of water. Put into preserving kettle, cover with boiling water and cook until soft, then drain. Weigh out 3½ pounds. Put on to cook with vinegar, sugar, cinnamon and cloves. Bring slowly to boiling point and let simmer 2½ hours. Pack in sterilized jars, add syrup to overflow and seal at once. A few bits of preserved ginger root are a nice addition.

Green Tomato Mince Meat.—Eight pounds green tomatoes, chopped very fine and drained thoroughly. Dissolve in 2 quarts of water 4 pounds brown sugar; when boiling fast put in the tomatoes and boil 1½ hours. Remove from the stove, add 2 cupfuls strong vinegar, 4 tablespoonfuls cinnamon, 1 tablespoonful cloves, 1 tablespoonful salt, ½ tablespoonful pepper, butter the size of an egg, raisins to suit the taste.

Peach Shortcakes, Whipped Cream.—Mix and sift 1½ cups of flour, 3 teaspoons of baking powder and ¼ teaspoon of salt: rub in 3 tablespoons of butter, moisten with a generous ½ cup of milk, pat and roll out, cut into rounds, bake in a hot oven, split, spread with butter, put diced canned peaches between and over the tops of the cakes and serve with whipped cream.

Handy Hints

To remove stains:

Grass Stains—Rub molasses well into the spots, leave for a few minutes, then wash out and launder as usual.

Peach Stains—Rub glycerine into the spots two or three days before laundering, and leave to dry.

Chocolate—Wash in cold water. Never rub soap on a chocolate stain before the article has been soaked in cold water, as soap and hot water will turn such a dry stain into a fast dye.

Fruit—Put the stain over a bowl and pour boiling water through.

Tar, Pitch, Turpentine, or Rosin—Soak in sweet oil, melted tallow or lard; wash in cold water, then launder as usual.

Ink—Immediately after ink has been spilt, take a sponge and mop up as much of it as possible. Have two bowls containing clear cold water beside you, the one to squeeze the inky sponge into, the other to dip it into when cleaned. Continue soaking the soiled spot with clean water until as much ink as possible is removed. If the stain is persistent apply to it a little oxalic acid or salts of sorrel, or even a weak solution of ammonia. You will find that these prompt remedies will prevent a very nasty stain.

ALONG THE WAY

I am richer for the feather of a bluebird's wing,
I am happier for the blossoms
Making glad the spring.
I am better for the laughter
Of a child I meet,
Kinder for the "Thank you"
Of a beggar in the street.
I am stronger for my striving,
Braver for defeat,
And the bitter things when conquered
Make the sweet more sweet.

—*Suzanne McKelvy.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB

Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. H. A. Stevens, 25 Beacon St., Boston, Mass.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card asking "*Shall* I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Stevens, saying that you *have* sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send those to the Book Club to be printed here.

SPECIAL NOTICES

It will greatly aid those who are sending books, magazines, cards, and so forth, if all our correspondents who send requests for their children will take pains to mention their names and ages. Lacking such information, one is likely to make mistakes; for a boy of twelve and a girl of seven are not usually interested in the same things.

When requesting books for the first time, correspondents should always give, as reference, the name and address of their clergyman.

When correspondents move to a new address, notice should be sent either to our headquarters, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass., or to those persons who have been sending books and magazines.

It is necessary to state positively that the Cheerful Letter Exchange is not a "clothing bureau" and not a "charitable" society in the usual sense of the word. We do not undertake to send correspondents money, clothing or household goods. Letters asking for that sort of assistance cannot receive attention. Letters not signed cannot be printed.

Many people do care for just the kind of friendly service for which we are organized. We limit our efforts to them and their wishes.

Those who enjoy receiving books and magazines are asked to remember that they, in their turn, can give much pleasure if they will take pains to write to the persons who send such reading matter. In cases where no word of response goes back—not even to say that the books or magazines were received—senders may suppose the parcels were not welcome. Let us each do our share.

OFFERS

Cheerful Letter Committee, All Souls Church, New York. Send requests to Mrs. F. C. Brush, Chairman, 29 High Street, Montclair, N. J.

Consumption—Its Prevention and Cure. Charles H. S. Davis, M.D.
A Search After Ultimate Truth. Aaron W. Crane.
Pilgrim Memorials. Russell.
The Practical Phrenologist. D. S. Fowler.
The American Bible. Matthew.
The English Bible. G. Campbell Morgan.
America's Stake in the Far East. Charles H. Faho.
The Adult Bible Class. W. C. Pearce.
The Law and the Word. Thomas Troward.
Sunrise in the Sunrise Kingdom. J. H. De Forest, D.D. (Forward Mission Study Course.)
The New Testament. Revised Version.
Interviews Memorable and Useful. Samuel H. Cox, D.D.
Plane Geometry by Syllabus Method. Smith.
Edenside. Mrs. George Cupples.
The World Almanac (1926), paper.
Hamilton's Arithmetic (First Book).
Open Gates. Collection of Poetry for Young People. Spaulding.
As Man Thinketh. James Allen.
Studies in John. White.
Catalogue of the Tenth Annual Exhibition at Carnegie Institute, 1906.
How the Church Came to England. Gertrude Hollis.
College Algebra (With Answers). Wells.
Elijah the Prophet. W. M. Taylor.
Saint Paul (Poetry). Frederic W. H. Myers.
Parables from Nature (paper). Mrs. Alfred Gatty.
The Joke about Housing. C. H. Whitaker.
Language Games (Primary Grade). Myra King.
John Livingston Nevins, for Forty Years a Missionary in China. By his wife, Helen S. C. Nevins.
Bible Text-Book. American Tract Society.
First (paper). Henry Drummond.
Hymn on Christ's Nativity. John Milton.
A Supplemental Bible Question Course, 1900. J. B. Smith.
Finding the Christ (paper). H. Emilie Cady.
The Spiritual Life of the Sunday School. J. W. Chapman.
With South Sea Folk. A Missionary Story. Crosby.
The American Indian on the New Trail. (Missionary Education Movement.) Thomas Moffat.
Thoughts. W. E. Channing, D.D.

Leaves from a Worker's Notebook (Y. M. C. A.). David McConaughy, Jr.
The Religion of To-morrow. Frank Crane.
Number 87. Harrington Hext.
Edmond Dantes. Alexander Dumas.
A Knight of the Cross (paper). Lawrence Saint.
The Changed Cross. Religious Poems.
Lord McCauley (Biography). Charles H. Jones.
The Force of Missions in a New China. Ira M. Condit.
The Presence of God. Chester Wood.
From Memory's Storehouse. E. Tennyson Smith.
Practising Christian Unity. Roy B. Guild.
Thoroughly Furnished. New Westminister Course for Teacher Training.
1. How to Teach the Life of Christ. Hugh T. Kerr, D.D.
2. The Principles of Teaching. Robert Wells Veach, D.D.
3. The Sunday School. Robert Wells Veach, D.D.
Hand Book on the Near East (for boys and girls from 9 to 14). Edith D. Glenn, M.R.E.
Undenominational Mission Studies for the Sunday School. Series 2 and 3. Edited by George H. Trull.
Whither Bound in Missions. Daniel J. Fleming.
China's Challenge to Christianity. Lucius C. Porter.
Addresses by Phillips Brooks.
The Scarlet Letter. Hawthorne.
Cathedral Bells (a novel). Vin Vincent.
Sermon in the Hospital (poetry). Ugo Bassi.
The Private Secretary—Duties and Opportunities. Kilduff.
Tales and Sketches. Hugh Miller.
Cicero—Selected Orations and Letters (Latin). Kelsey.
Book of Common Prayer, Protestant Episcopal Church.
Christus Judex. A Traveller's Tale. Edward Roth.
Oliver Goldsmith (Biography). Washington Irving.
Leaders of Men. A Book of Biographies, 1881. H. A. Page.
The Bow of Orange Ribbon. Amelia E. Barr.
Views Afoot. Bayard Taylor, 1892.
Consumption. John B. Hawes, 2d, M.D.
Hamilton's Arithmetic (Third Book).
Just You (Poem). Elizabeth Gordon.
Aristocracy in England. Adam Badeau.
Straight America—Our National Problems. 1916. Frances A. Kellor.
Teachers' Meetings (Sunday School). H. Clay Trumbull.
How to Study the Bible. R. A. Torrey.
The Child and America's Future. Jay S. Stowell.
An American Labor Policy. Julius H. Cohen.
The Lady of the Lake. Scott.
The Bible in the Making. J. Paterson Smyth.
The Italians in America. Phillip M. Rose.
The Institutional Church. Edward Judson.
William Fleming Stevenson, D.D. (Biography.) By his wife.
The Racial Prospect. Seth K. Humphrey.
Plane and Solid Geometry. Wentworth.

REQUESTS

1. I am a very poor woman with three small children and an aged mother. I would be so glad to receive any kind of books and magazines, and pictures for the children—a girl 9 years, boy 7, and baby one year old. Mrs. Roy Stanton, Green Cove, Va.

2. My husband and I live on a farm in the country. We have a little daughter, aged 5, and a baby boy. We would be so glad to receive books and magazines or papers, of a wholesome nature, and paper dolls and pictures for the children. Mrs. Millie V. McRae, Ansonville, N. C.

3. I am the mother of eleven children. I would appreciate some good reading, and pictures and stories for the children. One little girl has been sick all her life. Mrs. Nelson Testerman, Silas Creek, N. C.

4. Mrs. S. L. Turner, Dodson, Va., Box 13, writes she is the mother of six children. She would be mighty glad of some good reading that would help along with their education, and some pieces for quilts.

5. Mrs. G. W. Crum, Palestine, Texas, R. 7, Box 10, would appreciate wholesome light reading.

6. Almond Finch, Winder, Ga., R. 4, a boy about 17 years old, has an affected leg and has been unable to walk for eight months, and I am sure he would appreciate letters, cards, books or magazines that will help him to pass away the time. I was his teacher two years ago, and as I have been a cripple since I was a small child I can truly sympathize with him. Miss Bertha McElhannon, Winder, Ga., R. 4.

7. Mrs. Willis Burks, Pedlar Mills, Va., writes she is so sad and lonely. Her mother died this spring. Her husband had his fingers cut off. They have a boy three years and a baby 13 months. Any cheering message, books or magazines, scraps of thread and pieces for patchwork, or pictures for the kiddies, would help us to feel we have someone who cares.

8. Miss Vickie Shiveley, Stella, Va., is 23 years old, and has been blind for eleven years. Her reference writes she has no father or mother living. She has been to a school for the blind, and if anyone who reads this can send any cheer of any kind it would be a blessing, for she is a very brave girl. Send in care of Elisha Crawford, above address.

9. I want to thank the friends, through the

Cheerful Letter magazine, for remembering me and my children. I am 38 years old and the mother of eleven children. I would love to get some reading regularly. Mrs. Lilla Smith, Sandy Ridge, N. C.

10. Mrs. J. S. Osburn, Rupert, Ark., writes she is a young mother of two small children. Her health is very poor. They live miles from a railroad, on a farm. It is a blessing to read the *Cheerful Letter* magazine, and to feel that God is the author of all good things. She would appreciate a good magazine, and some quilt pieces and bits of thread.

11. I am writing for my mother, who would like to receive quilt scraps or knitting yarn; also, if anyone can send her a Bible she would be so glad to have it. Send to Mrs. H. B. Pruitt, Rupert, Ark.

12. Mrs. Lizzie Houchins, R. 1., Box 36, Dodson, Va., is the mother of four girls, 6, 4, 2 and 1, and two step-daughters, 13 and 17 years. She lost her own father in April, and feels so lonely. She comes to the *Cheerful Letter* asking for good reading to cheer and help the older girls to keep up with their studies, and pictures for the little folks; also, if not asking too much, she would appreciate quilt pieces and bits of thread.

13. Would you please send me some magazines or a book? I will pass them on when I have finished with them. I am confined to my chair day and night, and I get so lonesome way back here on a farm. I would love to get a letter or cards. Mrs. Martin McCullough, Sinclairville, N. Y., R. F. D. 39, Box 60.

14. I wish to thank all who have sent me reading matter recently. I am collecting stamps. If anyone has stamps on the original envelopes dated 1861 to 1865, would they send some to me? Hope I am not asking too much. Mrs. Harry C. Nelson, Stoneville, N. C.

15. I have received reading through the *Cheerful Letter* friends for a number of years. I write now to say my present address is Figure Five, Ark. I would appreciate hearing again from someone, and the children, ages 15, 11, 10, and 8, would enjoy stories and pictures. Mrs. Mary Heckard.

16. Will write you in answer to a package of pieces I received from a "*Cheerful Letter* friend." Wish you would have my greatest thanks and appreciation printed, as there was no return address. Mrs. Maude Wann, Wills Point, Texas.

17. Miss Edna Hamilton, Sandidges, Va., R. 2, is a girl of 18 years, who is the oldest of eight children, and is obliged to take the home cares, as her mother is not well. She lives far from town, and would appreciate good books and magazines, and cards or pictures for the younger children, also quilt pieces.

18. Mrs. C. M. Bradley, Sandidges, Va., R. 2, Box 33, would appreciate good magazines or a book or quilt pieces. She and her husband get very lonely in the winter evenings.

19. If any one has "Holmes' Old Series of Readers," would they send them to Wade H. Brooks, Marshville, N. C., R. 2?

20. Mrs. Bettie A. Short, Marytown, W. Va., an old friend, comes again asking for light reading.

A SECRET

Folks can't keep secrets, I have heard.
Somebody tells—a mouse or bird.
But trees! Our front yard maple tree
Hid something, four long months, from me!

I never dreamed of such a thing:
Building, blue eggs, mouths clamoring;
While green leaves clapped their hands and smiled:
She does not guess, that stupid child!

But finally the autumn came,
Touching our maple into flame,
And then a night wind stripped it bare,
And told the pretty secret there.

I spied it early, as I dressed:
A sturdy, outgrown robin's nest!
What lovelier secret could there be
Than that our maple hid from me?

—*Frances Crosby Hamlet.*

BOBBIE IS "ON"

Bobbie came home from school with a drawing he had made of the teacher, who had asked the pupils to draw her face, from where they sat, thereby testing their powers of observation. Bobbie was allowed to keep his as, somehow, the teacher didn't need it, so he proudly took it home to show his mother. "What are all the dots on the cheeks and nose?" asked mother. "Dem's prexils (freckles), same wot youse got when youse not dressed up," answered observant Bobbie.

UNIQUE PUSSY-WILLOW

My little niece, aged three, came to call on me one day accompanied by my mother, and on the way she had found a pussy-willow, and when she showed it to me she was very much delighted with it, as she had never seen one before.

When she left she forgot to take it with her. So on the way home she said to mother, "Oh! I left my stick with the cats on it up at auntie's house."

"GOOD HEALTH" NOTES

As school matters are vital, word is welcome from the United States Bureau of Education of the value of Manual Arts courses in high schools as rounding out a commercial or college preparatory curriculum. Pupils acquire the ability to do creative work inside of two years, of service later in tool manipulation industrially, or affording an avocation for leisure. Training is given in decoration, wise selection of furniture and household fixtures, care of plumbing and hardwood finishes, use of paint in and around the home, automobile operation, radio construction, blue print reading (used in building plans and electric, steam or oil systems), and general appreciation of print shop products. Where such courses are available there is steady increase of students electing them.

The Children's Museum of Brooklyn, having outgrown its quarters, is moving into a fine new building, double the size, containing an auditorium seating 200 for lectures, for which it has thousands of lantern slides. Exhibits of special interest to children will be shown—Boy Scout equipment, Art and Nature study (mostly birds), while the old building will house additional material on History, Geography and Natural Science. The curator is Miss Anna Billings Gallup.

This is "Clean Up" time, and lawns and gutters are being raked and branches picked up for burning or dumping in a prepared hole to yield back valuable material for spading into flower beds or around the roots of shrubs. "Wet garbage" may be included, if care is taken to prevent laying of insect eggs in refuse by sprinkling a thin layer of sand or dirt over each deposit.

Little care is taken to destroy poisonous plants where animals graze, in fact few know their danger. In some localities, however, ordinances have been passed prohibiting the growth of poison ivy (poison oak), owners being fined and made to remove it if found. W. C. Muenscher, writing in the *Dairyman's Magazine*, tells of many noxious species in the Northeastern States. Cattle will not touch them unless food is scarce, when they may partake sufficiently to cause death. Mr. Muenscher urges farmers to study what parts of these plants, shrubs or trees are poisonous, at what season and which section animals are liable to eat. Cowbane or Water Hemlock (sometimes called Wild Parsnip) heads the list found in pastures and by streams, with small white flowers in umbrella shaped clusters, large leaves dividing into many leaflets and fleshy tuberous root with strong parsnip like odor. Persons eating the root by mistake have been fatally affected, and cattle are likely to eat it in the spring, when easily uprooted. Bracken or brake fern is common in fields or wooded dry sandy soil. It has large triangular leaves, stalks one to three feet high, and is eaten by cattle late in summer or during drough, when green vegetation is not plentiful. If consumed over prolonged period death may result, and horses have been poisoned by hay containing large amounts of it. Poison hemlock—celebrated as causing the death of the philosopher Socrates, condemned to drink a cup of its brew—grows by the wayside and in waste places, is tall with smooth purple-spotted hollow stems, large parsley-like leaves and showy umbrella heads of smallish white flowers. Several substances deadly to man and beast are in the roots, leaves and seeds. Mountain laurel, shrubs or small tree, with lone shiny evergreen leaves and large groups of pink blossoms or dry round fruit, is poisonous to sheep or cattle (as is the dwarf sheep laurel). Wild black cherry and choke cherry, found chiefly along fences, with currant-like strings of dark berries, and the pin or fire cherry (named for its love of burned over areas), whose berries grow in groups like sweet cherries—the garden variety—poison cattle eating their withered leaves, which are full of prussic acid in that condition, but harmless when thoroughly dried in hay. American false hellebor, sometimes four feet high, is abundant in marshy places, has large pleated leaves and bears loose clusters of green-white flowers at top of plant. Seldom touched because of the bitter taste, it is fatal for humans or animals. Pokeweed or inkberry, a common tall bushy plant, has large alternate leaves or purplish stems and strings of greenish-white flowers or shiny purple berries full of crimson juice, dear to children as play ink or vanilla extract for mud pies (one berry serving as raisin in center). Young stalks are cooked as asparagus substitute, but, in old plants at least, the large white roots and seeds are very poisonous. The yellow buttercup, held traditionally under the chin as test of love for butter, has a bitter peppermint taste which prevents cattle eating it, though poisonous unless properly dried in hay. White snakeroot frequents places, has nettle-like leaves in pairs up the stalk, blooms in late summer with small white flowers in flat-topped fat heads and causes "trembles" in cattle and "milk sickness" in man, the poison being soluble, fat and apparently transmitted through the milk of cows which have eaten it. Other plants, as St. John's wort, cowslip, Indian tobacco, Dutchman's breeches or squirrel corn produce death, but rarely is a sufficient amount eaten. Dependent as we are upon livestock for service and food it behooves us to treat them with kindness and intelligent care.

—Laura R. Donnell.

THE OLD-TIME TRAVELING "PEDDLER"

How vividly I remember the first time I ever saw him. It was up on the old farm among the hills and valleys of southern New Hampshire. I was out in the field across the road from the house, watching my father plow in the mellow sunshine of a late autumn afternoon. As he stopped to rest the horses, I came plodding along in my bare feet. I loved to feel the cold, crumbly loam ooze up between my toes.

Father glanced up toward the little, white story-and-a-half-with-ell farm home. "Well, well," he exclaimed, in tones of pleased surprise. "The peddler's here again. Let's go up and see him."

Somewhat different from the reception modern "peddlers" receive.

I still see that long ago outfit. The peddler had a pair of lanky horses hitched to a small-sized edition of a kind of covered wagon; the latter was drab and dusty from dreary miles of country roads. The cart had a railing around the top, and it carried all sorts of things: chairs, ladders, brooms and big kettles.

On the seat sat the old peddler. A "man of mystery" he was. During the past two years he had missed his trip in our region, so he was but a hazy legend in childish minds. I and my three sisters had listened spellbound many a time as we had heard recounted tales of the peddler's romantic life. Now I was seeing him.

He was of medium height. A growth of reddish, tawny beard covered his face. His trousers and sweater were dark and he wore an old cap.

Mother came to the door. Hanging onto her skirts with chubby, grimy fists were the three girls, looking with fearful, wondering eyes at the much talked of stranger.

"Come down, sir," called Dad as he crossed the road. "We've been looking for you. You're late this year."

The keeper of the "store on wheels" slowly descended. He was tired and stiff from a hard day's journeying. He shook hands with Dad and Mother and tried to pick up Edith, the middle sister, but she kicked and yelled with all her might. As soon, however, as Mother went to look in the fascinating darkness of the wagon she got over her fright and tried to scramble up on the tail board of the cart.

In that cavern that looked as big to me then as a modern department store does now, it seemed as though there was displayed every article known to man; there were cloths and clothes of every sort; rubbers, trinkets, jewelry and kitchen utensils. There were clocks, dishes, soaps and perfumes, shoes, boots and laces. I shall never forget the first pair of boots I had—from the peddler. They were black as night and around the top was a wide band of red, and they had red shoelaces.

To get them I had to promise faithfully to fill the woodbox and water Sam and Ned, the farm horses, for a month. But I never regretted my trade. I was the proudest boy in town when I wore them to school. How the rest stood around in a circle and admired them while I tried to be blasé and nonchalant—quite as if it were the usual thing for me to have such boots, instead of its being the event of a lifetime.

There was really no limit to the variety in that peddler's cart. While we peered and admired, Father went with the trader to put the horses in the barn, for he was to stay all night with us. Then Mother would take the pay for his stop in goods and wares the next morning.

There was no more plowing that night. It was getting late in the day, anyway. The sun was dropping down behind towering old blue-black Monadnock in the west. The shadows were creeping up the sides of Temple Mountains, lying dark and quiet across the valley to the east. I unhitched Sam and Ned and brought them up to the barn. What a difference in their gait between going to their supper and pulling the plow across the field. I had to trot behind them, hanging on to the reins for dear life.

Then while the chores were being done the peddler reminisced with Father. At last the horses were rubbed down and the stalls deeply bedded with straw so they could rest comfortably for the night. They stood placidly and munched away contentedly on their hay. The cows indolently flicked their tails and serenely, passively, chewed their cuds. In their box stalls the calves, filled to repletion with their supper of warm milk, cavorted and played about. All was tranquil and happy in the farm family.

Then Dad, carrying two big pailfuls of foamy milk, went into the house, still talking animatedly with the peddler. I came along behind with Laddie, the farm collie, who was tired with his day's futile efforts to catch the wily old woodchuck that lived in a hole under the pasture wall. It was dusk now; the base of Monadnock was dark. The shadows were lighter higher up, until at the top the peak was a blaze of glorious red, purple and gold. Supper was hot and waiting. While Mother strained the milk into round tin pans, we "washed up." I have often wondered why people say "wash up" when they mean down.

Then at the table, after the blessing was asked, the witchery began. While the red, juicy ham and the snow white mashed potato disappeared down hungry throats, and beaten biscuits, pickles, honey and bread and butter went the inevitable way of all good victuals, we listened enchanted to the peddler.

He had been everywhere, all over the country. He had seen the pickaninnies in the fields of billowing cotton in the Southland; been on 'possum hunts; heard the darkies singing their haunting plantation melodies before their cabin doors during the evening. He had traversed the rich plains of the Middle West where homes were far apart and grain grew in fields so big you could not see across them; he told us how sometimes out there terrific cyclones came and lifted roofs from barns and carried them miles away; how grasshoppers would come in such thick hordes that they would leave a green, flourishing field nothing but a brown, drab, barren surface.

Then he told us of the Western cow ranches, and of sleeping nights beneath the starry skies while coyotes howled on the ridges behind; there were yarns of the Golden Gate country where it rained weeks at a time, and then not again for a year.

We listened breathlessly while he told tales of his life in the wilds of Alaska when he was prospecting there for gold and had driven dog teams fifty miles a day with the thermometer fifty degrees below zero.

He had been one winter in wild lumbering camps of the Canadian forests, and we heard as he told the crash of giant forest monarchs as they fell to earth and sent echoes ringing down the dim aisles of the woodland. We hunted the moose and bear with him, and shivered as he told of the timber wolves—gray, phantom scourges of the North, as their blood-curdling howls rang over the frozen lake and forest, announcing that the pack was hot on the scent of blood.

Far into the evening he talked, telling of his younger days. We learned more geography and natural history from those three hours than we would in a month's perusal of school books. But at last Mother said, "Come, children; to bed with you, or there will be sleepy eyes tomorrow."

As we climbed the narrow stairs to the snug little chambers under the eaves, we could still hear the peddler, now answering Father's questions about politics and business in other places.

A long time I lay awake in my bed that night. On the slanting roof, close above me, the limbs of the big maple tree at the corner of the house rubbed from time to time. I could hear the wind singing in the tree's branches. Down by the little brook below the house, a whip-poor-will called plaintively. From my bed I could see the stars shining over Monadnock's dark, blue mass looming steadfastly in the sky. And I lived again in far places, and resolved, as I fell asleep, that some day I, too, would be a traveler in adventurous spots of the earth.—*Haydn S. Pearson, in Boston Transcript.*

Time has solved many problems, where man's calculations have failed.

FICTION WE REMEMBER

The Conqueror

By Gertrude Atherton

Its subtitle, "The True and Romantic Story of the Birth, Life and Death of Alexander Hamilton, Statesman, Orator and Soldier," makes clear the fact that it is a combination of fiction and biography. A large amount of its material is drawn from family papers and public documents relating to events in the United States and the West Indies, on one of the islands of which, Nevis, Hamilton was born. She tells the story with an extraordinary amount of detail, introducing all the conspicuous figures in early American politics and showing Hamilton in his private as well as in the public relations with the men and women of the time. Throughout the story he is made a veritable hero. A conventional account is given of the fatal duel, with a strong bias against Burr and in favor of his antagonist.

In a way, "The Conqueror" is a fascinating story. "Having unburdened my imagination," writes Mrs. Atherton, "I shall in the course of a year or two write the biography I first had in mind." But many years have elapsed since "The Conqueror" appeared in 1902, and the biography that she projected still remains in the author's mind, or perhaps in manuscript. In fact, the novel tells practically the whole story.—*Boston Transcript.*

SAFE

Three-year-old Billy was spending the summer with his uncle. One day, while he was playing, his uncle noticed him pulling the dog's tail. He spoke to him saying, "Don't pull his tail, Billy, he will bite you."

Billy quickly answered, "No he won't, uncle, because he can't bite from this end."

Traffic Cop—"What's your name?"
Truck Driver—"It's on the side of me wagon."
Cop (trying to read name)—"It's obliterated."
Driver—"Yer a liar! It's O'Brien!"

"Well," remarked a married man after examining his friend's new flat, "I wish I could afford a place like this."

"Yes," said his friend, "you married men may have better halves, but we bachelors usually have better quarters."

Man's tongue is soft, and bone doth lack. Yet a stroke therewith may break a man's back. —*Franklin.*

Charity, without the heart, is a sin.

A PAGE FOR THE CHILDREN

DOG BRUCE'S PLAYMATE

Dog Bruce was lonesome. All summer long he had had the children to play with—Alice, Edith, Edgar and Tom, but now school days had come, and every morning his playfellows went away to school. When they came home again they were so busy learning lessons, or doing something for their mother, that they had little time to play with Bruce.

One morning Bruce decided he would take a walk and find a playmate. He went down the walk and out of the gate, looking for a playfellow.

He walked on and on. By and by he saw a little boy sitting on the edge of the curb, making mud pies. He had a can of water, and was pouring it on the dirt and stirring it with a big stick. Bruce knew all about mud pies, so he stopped and put his nose against the boy's shoulder. Then he started to drink the water, for he was thirsty.

"Go away!" said the boy crossly, giving him a push. "I had to bring that water all the way from the house, and I want it for my pies."

Bruce walked away. He didn't want such a cross boy as that for a playmate. No, indeed!

Then he met a baby girl in her carriage. She was having a nice morning ride and laughing and crowing. She clapped her little hands when she saw Bruce and tried to lean out of the carriage.

Bruce came nearer, but the maid who was wheeling her stamped her foot and said, "Go away, you great big dog!" So Bruce went on.

All at once he saw a group of boys gathered around something on the sidewalk. Bruce liked boys, for he always played with Tom and Edgar and their friends, so he came nearer. When he came up to these boys he saw they were tormenting a poor little frightened kitten.

Bruce did not like bad boys, so he pushed in among them and showed his teeth and growled. Now Bruce was a big dog and the boys were not very big, and they were cowards, too, as boys always are who can tease something that cannot help itself, so away they ran, and Bruce was left alone with the kitten.

The poor little thing was so tired and frightened she could not even mew: she just lay there with her eyes shut and her sides panting.

Bruce thought a few minutes, then gently he picked the little kitten up in his mouth, and started for home. He was very gentle, for the children had taught him how to carry things carefully and daintily, and he did not hurt her at all.

When he reached home he hunted up the children's mother and laid the kitten at her feet. At first she thought it was dead, but she wrapped it carefully in a soft shawl and poured some warm milk down its throat, and soon it began to purr a tiny little purr.

Then she put it in a basket and set it down by the fireplace. Bruce lay down beside it, as much as to say, "I must take care of my kitten."

When the children came home from school and heard how Bruce had brought it home they begged to keep it.

Their mother said they might do so. "I think Bruce has been lonesome," she said, "and perhaps they will be company for each other while you are at school."

Every day Bruce and the kitten played together. Bruce would let her run all over his back as he lay on the floor, and many a fine game of romps they had. When she was tired and wanted a nap she would curl down against his paws and sleep.

Even when she grew to be a big cat she would always go everywhere with Bruce, and many a nap they had, side by side; and now he had such a nice playmate, Bruce was never lonely any more.—*Emma Florence Bush, in "The Mayflower."*

AN INTERESTING LETTER

From One of Our Readers

Dear Children: My little boy, ten years old, wishes me to tell you that you can have lots of fun playing with clothespins. You can make soldiers and horses out of them. He has played with them since he was five years old.

If you have ever seen soldiers march you will know how to fix your pins. You lay them on the floor in rows to make the horses. You pin two pins together and they will stand up: then you have a man on a horse.

Put three of these in front. Then lay 10 or 20 pins in rows back of them for the band. Then take a lot of pins and lay them in rows back of the band to make the company. You can put men on horseback between the band and the company of men.

Oh, you can make lots of men, make them march, and all. I could not begin to tell you all the fun my little boy has.

Wishing you lots of fun.—*John and Mrs. Becker.*

Mother—"What's the matter, Johnny? Don't you like your preserved figs?"

Johnny—"Please, mother, they're just skins full of periods."

He is the rich man who can avail himself of all men's faculties. He is the richest man who knows how to draw a benefit from the labours of the greatest number of men, of men in distant countries and in past times.—*Emerson.*

"ALL EDUCATION IS RELIGIOUS"

Rev. E. Burdette Backus, of Los Angeles, California, speaking on the subject of "Religious Education," says that "the term 'religious education' is an unfortunate one, since all education worthy of the name is religious, in that it is part of the human endeavor to achieve fullness of life.

"I cannot refrain from injecting a word of criticism of the proposed introduction of religious education into the public schools," he said. "Chief among my reasons is the deep-seated conviction that the proposal, even in its most progressive forms, perpetuates a wrong idea of religion as something apart from the rest of life, a thing which can be taught as a separate subject. I resent the implication that our schools are not religious at present. Wherever a sympathetic soul is trying to hold a child to the business of living, religion is being taught. Schools could be more religious than they are, but it is not done by specific instruction, but in the spirit in which the teaching is done."

Mr. Backus believes that the church school has a distinctive contribution to make to the process of enriching human life, which is both religious and educational. The formation of character is a worthy objective, but the church school must have a humbler aim, since it has the children for so brief a period each week, while character is being formed every hour of the day. The most it can hope to do is to make some contribution to the formation of character. Boys and girls are brought into contact with a group of people who are definitely conscious of religion as the coöperative quest for the satisfying life. "It is no small thing for growing children to breathe once a week the atmosphere surcharged with personalities committed to this ideal. It cannot but have a tonic effect," Mr. Backus declared.

"Always there must be the sense that here we are learning a thing not for its own sake merely but because we want to become more effective instruments by means of which human life in the individual shall move on to more of goodness, beauty, truth."

Mr. Backus emphasized the two qualities most essential in dealing with material in the church school. One is the open mind and the other is the reverent heart. The great aim of instruction is not to stamp one's mind on the young, but to stir their own minds. The qualities of the open mind are ability to take an objective view in reading, to have intellectual patience and suspend judgment until there is more evidence, to be tolerant, and to keep a fluid state of mind which does not crystallize into a feeling of finality. It is important to increase the number who have open minds, for the open mind is not merely an instrument to sense the truth, but it stresses the sacredness of life itself. It makes one aware of the beauties and possibilities of one's life and arouses a passion for humanity, he said in conclusion.

ALL IN THE STATE OF MIND

If you think you're beaten, you are;
  If you think you dare not, you don't;
If you'd like to sell, but think you can't,
  It's almost a cinch you won't.
If you think you'll lose, you're lost,
  For in selling goods you'll find
Success begins with the salesman's will,
  It's all in the state of mind.

Full many a sale is lost
  Ere ever a word is said;
And many a coward fails
  Because others think he's dead.
Think big and your sales will grow;
  Think small and you'll fall behind;
Think that you can, and you will;
  It's all in the state of mind.

If you think you're outclassed, you are;
  You've got to think high to rise;
You've got to be sure of yourself and your goods
If you're going to win the prize.
Life's battles don't always go
  To the stronger or faster man,
But soon or late the man who wins
  Is the fellow who thinks he can.

—"*Anon.*"

UPHOLDING THE LAW

Dr. Harry A. Garfield, President of Williams College, while not mentioning the name of either of the candidates for the Presidential election, emphatically says that any public official must either support the existing dry law or "betray a public trust."

"He has one imperative duty to perform, with respect to such a statute," says Dr. Garfield, "and that is to enforce it. Having chosen to write into our fundamental instrument the Eighteenth Amendment, and the Supreme Court having held it to be constitutional, a personal problem becomes a public question. . . . It is true, as political leaders hasten to say, that 'prohibition' is not a political question. But respect for law is. Prohibition is primarily a moral and social problem. Until enacted into law it presents a personal problem only. 'If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no meat.' Respect for law, on the other hand, is essentially a political, a community question. A law, of course, can be changed, but a public official who uses the powers of his office to defeat or weaken the operation of an existing constitutional statute lessens respect for law and betrays a public trust."

HELP!

WHAT a revelation would sometimes result if we stopped long enough to inquire into the details of situations of distress.

One afternoon a man heard shouts for help coming from the skating pond, and running to the pond he saw a large hole in the ice and a pale-faced young man standing in the center of the hole. He laid a board on the thin ice and crawled to the edge of the hole, extended his hand and told the young fellow to wade over to him and he would lift him out.

"Get a rope," replied the young man. "I can't swim."

"I have no rope," said the man; and he added angrily, "What if you can't swim—you can wade, I guess! The water's only up to your shoulders."

"Up to my shoulders?" said the fellow. "It's eight feet deep if it's an inch. I'm standing on the blamed fat man who broke the ice."—*Kablegram.*

I COUNT him a great man who inhabits a higher sphere of thought, into which other men rise with labour and difficulty; he has but to open his eyes to see things in a true light, and in large relations; whilst they must make painful corrections, and keep a vigilant eye on many sources of error. . . . He is great who is what he is from nature, and who never reminds us of others.—*Emerson.*

A CERTAIN man was suspected by his wife of receiving phone calls from other women.

About 9 o'clock one night the following conversation could be heard:

Husband—"Hello, Elmer?"

"Is that you Elmer?"

"You are, Elmer?"

"Yes, I would, Elmer."

"Certainly I will, Elmer."

"No, Elmer, all right, Elmer."

"Well, goodby, Elmer."

Then the man turned to his suspicious wife and said: "That was Elmer."

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE

ITS PURPOSE

To cheer and comfort those who are ill, lonely, or discouraged, through the exchange of letters and by gifts of books and magazines.

To help those who live far from schools, or who wish to continue their studies by means of correspondence with a teacher.

To give to those living far from church some of the helps which churches give. One good sermon or similar article is printed in each number. These sermons are never doctrinal, but present only such simple religious truths and principles as are agreed on by all churches.

WHERE TO WRITE

1. *Letters paying for subscriptions to the paper,* fifty cents a year, should be sent to the Cheerful Letter Exchange, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Checks or postal orders should be made payable to the Cheerful Letter Exchange.

2. *Letters asking for correspondents* should be sent to the Chairman, Mrs. H. A. Stevens, 25 Beacon St., Boston, Mass.

3. *Letters asking for help in studying at home* should be sent to Mrs. George O. Sands, Brimble Ave., North Beverly, Mass.

The Home Study Committee has on hand a variety of schoolbooks which may be used by students either at home or in the schoolroom. The aim of the teachers is to help in any study where help is needed. Often this may fit a person for a higher grade of work.

4. *Letters about the establishment of Circulating Libraries* should be sent to Mrs. Henry R. Bowser, 36 Lancaster St., Cambridge, Mass.

A Circulating Library will be started in any small community needing one, if proper location and care can be furnished and satisfactory references can be given. Two hundred and thirty-nine are now on our lists.

5. The Secretary of the Cheerful Letter Exchange, Miss Ethel L. Hersey, Hingham, Mass., should receive the more general correspondence from workers on the local committees, or from others interested in the organization and its methods.

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